

Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Interdisciplinary and
Trans-disciplinary Studies

MPY – 001

Indian Philosophy



Block 5



INDIAN SYSTEMATIC PHILOSOPHY

UNIT 1

Logic and Epistemology



UNIT 2

Metaphysics

UNIT 3

Ethics



UNIT 4

Aesthetics

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Logic is the study of inference and argument. Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge. The logic and theory of knowledge of Indian systems are largely coloured by their metaphysical tenets. The central questions of epistemology include the origin of knowledge, the place of experience in generating knowledge and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and the responsibility of error and changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualisations of the world. Metaphysics as a theory of reality raises profound questions about the nature of matter, life, mind, God, space, time, numbers, of causation, freedom and fate, and of objects and events. It is not possible to speak of Indian Metaphysics in the singular. Each school of Indian Philosophy has developed a distinct metaphysical view that is consistent with its epistemology and ethics. The motive of metaphysical thinking in the Indian tradition has been practical and not merely theoretical. Specialty of Indian philosophical thinking is that rational enquiry does not aim only at abstract speculation about reality but is done with practical insights for everyday living. All schools of Indian philosophy ends their philosophical discussions with moral injunctions to perfect one's own personal life and to create a healthy and a peaceful society. Indian Aesthetics is a witness to the fine and subtle philosophical exposition of Indian masters.

Unit 1 makes the students know about the system of logic in Indian thought and of the different means of knowledge accepted in the different schools of Indian thought. Every classical Indian systems deal with logic, the object of knowledge (*prameya*), the means of valid knowledge (*Pramana*), the resultant of valid knowledge (*prama*). This unit focuses on the discussion on various means of knowledge accepted or rejected by different schools.

Unit 2 provides a sketch of Indian Metaphysical theories of different schools. This unit looks into the fundamental questions raised and answered by Indian metaphysics and outlines its conceptual structure. It will provide a comprehensive account of Indian Materialism, Realism, Dualism, Pluralism, Idealism and Absolutism of different schools of Indian tradition.

Unit 3 on 'Indian ethics' is a short survey of the ethical foundation of Hindu religious philosophy and of other philosophical schools like Buddhism, Jainism and Carvaka. The essential Buddhist and Jaina ethics consist in *Pancasila* and *Pancamahavrata*. Vedic ethics gives emphasis on the individual morality in terms of societal well being. However, Carvaka ethics focus on life of happiness and pleasure here on earth upholding materialistic and physical aspects.

Unit 4 studies the origin and development of Indian Aesthetics as art appreciation and experience. It expounds various theories of Aesthetics from the written sources on aesthetics with the contemporary discussion on the philosophical implications of aesthetic theories.